

creative learning

center

PROGRESSIVE
EDUCATION



PARENT HANDBOOK



Dear Parent(s),

In keeping with New Jersey's child care licensing requirements, we are obligated to provide you, as the parent of a child enrolled at creative learning center ("the Center"), with this informational handbook. Included is the DCF (Division of Children and Families) Information to Parents document which explains your right to visit our school any time, our obligation to be licensed and to comply with licensing standards, and the Center's obligation to report suspected child abuse/neglect. Please complete and return this portion to the Center.

Name of Child _____

Name of Parent(s) _____

I have read and received a copy of the creative learning center parent handbook which includes the Information to Parents document prepared by the Bureau of Licensing in DCF. I have also read the information and policies listed below:

policy on the release of children, policy regarding positive guidance and discipline, policy on methods of parental notification, policy on communicable disease management, expulsion policy, and the policy on the use of technology and social media.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Please print this page and return a signed copy to the Center.



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EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The creative learning center is a special place where children are encouraged to become self-confident, independent, and creative thinkers. Our program provides rich and engaging learning experiences, stimulating the total development of the individual child. While language and cognitive skills are emphasized, the development of social, emotional, and motor skills are equally supported.

At the creative learning center, we believe that learning is an integrated process that occurs when children are encouraged to play, experience, and discover. Children need to be actively involved in this learning process. Materials are selected to engage children in active, meaningful learning. Developmentally appropriate activities and experiences are provided by the teachers.

The content of our program strives for school success by developing the qualities that feed into success and individual growth. These qualities include the development of each child's self-confidence and his or her sense of worth, the child's motivation to learn and the child's enjoyment of the total learning process.

INTELLECTUAL OBJECTIVES

- ✓ To fully develop within the child the love of learning.
- ✓ To give the child the freedom to make choices within a planned environment, enabling them to develop initiative, competence, and the ability to solve problems independently.
- ✓ To give the child a variety of experiences that involves manipulation, experimentation, and discovery.
- ✓ To encourage the child to utilize all of their senses in observing and understanding the world.
- ✓ To provide learning experiences that begins at the child's level of ability.
- ✓ To encourage language and literacy development.
- ✓ To provide the child with successful learning activities in all academic areas, allowing them to work concretely with concepts and ideas before applying them on an abstract level.

SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL OBJECTIVES

- ✓ To create a classroom atmosphere conducive to interpersonal interaction.
- ✓ To provide opportunities to support children's beginning friendships.
- ✓ To provide opportunity for role-playing and sharing of different viewpoints.
- ✓ To create a positive self-concept.
- ✓ To encourage the child to take responsibility and initiative for learning.
- ✓ To coach children in social problem-solving and conflict resolution skills.
- ✓ To develop the child's self-discipline and self-confidence.
- ✓ To encourage independence and self-help skills.
- ✓ To develop a child's attention span and learning abilities.
- ✓ To stimulate a child's curiosity so that he will reach out, experiment, and seek new knowledge.

PERCEPTUAL-MOTOR OBJECTIVES

- ✓ To develop coordination of movement as well as balance and poise.
- ✓ To develop gross motor skills.
- ✓ To develop fine motor coordination.
- ✓ To develop eye-hand coordination and perceptual skills.

AESTHETIC OBJECTIVES

- ✓ To provide a stimulating, open-ended arts and crafts program where children feel free to create and invent.
- ✓ To develop a child's innate creativity and spontaneity.
- ✓ To encourage participation in music, cooking, and creative movement activities.
- ✓ To provide opportunities for children to represent ideas and feelings through the arts.
- ✓ To develop an appreciation for the arts.

TUITION INFORMATION

Each child is enrolled in a program or programs for the entire school year, a ten month period from September through June. Deposits are not refundable. The deposit is applied to your child's last tuition payment. All students are required to have a signed contract in order to attend our school. Please read the contract for further information regarding financial obligations.

For your convenience, tuition may be paid in four installments. You will receive a tuition booklet with coupons that indicate due dates for the installments. Please place your tuition payment along with your coupon in an envelope and place it in our lobby mailbox. Your tuition payment is due by the fifteenth of the month as designated in your tuition booklet.

Late fees will be applied as stated in your contract. If your check is returned to us by the bank due to insufficient or uncollected funds, you will be charged a \$45.00 service charge. In addition, if a second check is returned to us, we will require that the rest of your school payments be made by certified check, money order, or cash.

ABSENCE

There are no credits or refunds given for scheduled holidays. There are no credits or refund for any days that your child may miss due to illness, snow, storm, personal vacation, or any other personal reason. Because our classes are full each day, we cannot provide any make-up days.

Your child will receive additional days during the school year due to school trips and holidays. If a field trip is scheduled on a day that your child does not ordinarily attend, he or she will be invited to attend for that special event. In cases of extended illness, one month or more, a tuition credit will be considered only with verification of the child's illness from a pediatrician.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

Before school hours are from 8:30 until 9:00 A.M. Morning nursery class hours are from 9:00 until 11:45 A.M. Afternoon nursery class hours are from 12:30 until 3:00 P.M. Enrichment classes meet from 11:45 A.M. until 2:30 P.M. Primary Learning (Kindergarten/First Grade) meets from 9:00 A.M. until 2:30 P.M.

Please be prompt in bringing and collecting your child. We will expect you to arrive within five minutes of the opening time of each session. When you arrive later than that, your child misses too much of our activity time and also causes disruption to the class. Primary Learning Community students will be marked tardy for each late arrival.

Primary students arriving late must receive a late pass from the front office for entry into class. Please cooperate by being punctual each day.

If you are late collecting your child at dismissal time, there will be a \$5.00 per 15 minutes late charge. The charge will be applied after a ten minute grace period. The late charge MUST be paid in cash that day. If you know that you are going to be detained, please notify the school immediately so that we can inform your child and adjust our class plans. Consistent lateness will be cause for dismissal of your child from school.

When you arrive to collect your child from school, please sign your child out on the teacher's dismissal forms. Once you sign out your child, you are expected to hold your child by the hand and leave the premises. Siblings are not permitted to roam on the playground or in the classrooms and must be attended to at all times.

Class One will enter the school building from the front (Avenue at the Commons side); Class Two will enter from the second door off the playground; Class Three will enter through the back lobby; Primary Learning Community will enter through the doorway along the back of the school. Class Five will enter through the Class Two doorway and Class Six will enter through the rear lobby. If you need to come into the school after 3:30 p.m., please enter through the front lobby.

EMERGENCY CLOSING AND SNOW DAYS

Please check your e-mail for information regarding school closings. An e-mail will be sent to you early in the morning to inform you that we are closing due to inclement weather. We also have an emergency phone chain that is organized by parent coordinators. The coordinators are responsible for contacting all of the parents in their designated class to inform them of emergency closings. If the weather becomes snowy during the day or if there is a need for an emergency closing, one of the coordinators will call you in case of early dismissal.

MANDATORY ORIENTATION FOR NEW PARENTS

If this is your first experience at creative learning center, and have not had other children attend our programs, you are required to attend a two hour orientation program that is scheduled for an evening in late May or early June. You will be

notified of the dates available. At this orientation, we will teach you more about our philosophy, procedures, and how to handle separation and other difficult issues. This program has been extremely helpful to parents in the past and we feel it is necessary for every parent to participate to ensure a successful school year.

HEALTH POLICY AND MEDICAL FORMS

Your child's health is a matter of utmost importance. In order for your child to enjoy school activities fully, he or she needs a good night rest and a complete breakfast. Certain health policies have been established with the children's best interests in mind. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, he/she should not attend the Center. If such symptoms occur at the Center, the child will be removed from the group, and you will be called to take him/her home.

- ❖ Severe pain or discomfort
- ❖ Acute diarrhea
- ❖ Episodes of acute vomiting
- ❖ Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit
- ❖ Sore throat or severe coughing
- ❖ Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
- ❖ Red eyes with discharge
- ❖ Infected, untreated skin patches
- ❖ Difficult or rapid breathing
- ❖ Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- ❖ Skin rashes lasting longer than 24 hours
- ❖ Swollen joints
- ❖ Visibly enlarged lymph nodes
- ❖ Stiff neck
- ❖ Blood in urine

Once the child is symptom-free, or has a doctor's note stating that he/she no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, he/she may return to the Center.

Please keep your child home for at least 24 hours after a fever. Your child may come to school if his or her cold is basically over, but he or she is left with a minor, clear nasal discharge. In cases of contagious illness, a note from your child's pediatrician is REQUIRED before your child will be readmitted to school.

Please use your best judgment in determining if your child is healthy enough to be in a school environment. If we all work together, the spreading of illness will be controlled.

No child will be admitted to school without COMPLETE medical forms and information forms, as required by the State of NJ. There will be no exceptions to this policy. A current, written record is maintained for each child, including the results of a complete health evaluation by an approved health care resource within six months prior to enrollment. This includes a full record of immunizations, emergency contact information, names of people authorized to collect the child, and a pertinent health history (such as allergies or chronic conditions). It is essential that emergency numbers are fully listed on the information forms. If you have a car phone, cellular or beeper, please be certain to provide these numbers as well.

In cases of accidental injury or emergency medical situations, immediate attempts will be made to contact a parent. If we cannot reach you or anyone listed on your emergency phone list, we will call our school physician. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or the paramedics. Any expenses incurred are the responsibility of the family.

NUT AWARE SCHOOL ZONE

Our school is very aware of nut allergies present in children. Peanut butter and all other nuts are prohibited. We will not serve any nuts or products that include nuts in our classrooms. However, we do permit snacks that may have been processed in a plant that also processes nuts. Parents of children with nut allergies will be required to provide the child's snacks each week. For lunch periods, when students bring lunches from home, the following guidelines apply:

Parents may not pack any lunch items that contain nuts including peanut butter.

Parents must read labels of packages. If the package says, "May contain nuts," the package is NOT permitted. However, if the label reads, "Processed in a plant that also processes nuts," the product IS allowed.

Because we cannot eliminate all exposure to nuts, we seat children with nut allergies at a separate table during snack and lunch periods. Before and after lunch, we have all children wash (or wipe) hands. We ask that parents of children with nut allergies provide us with hand wipes to help us maintain a safe environment. Thank you for your cooperation.

POLICY ON MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Children exhibiting symptoms of communicable disease will not be permitted to attend school. A note from the child’s pediatrician indicating that the child is no longer contagious is required before the child will be readmitted to class. A child who contracts any of the following diseases may not return to the Center without a physician’s note stating that the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others:

Respiratory Illnesses	Gastrointestinal Illnesses	Contact Illnesses
Chicken Pox	Giardia Lamblia*	Impetigo
German Measles	Hepatitis A*	Lice
Hemophilus Influenzae*	Salmonella*	Scabies
Measles*	Shigella*	Tuberculosis*
Meningococcus*	Strep Throat	Whooping Cough*
Mumps*		

*Reportable diseases that will be reported to the health department by the Center. A reportable disease is an illness that the Department of Health needs to know to prevent spread of the illness. If a staff member or an enrolled child has a reportable disease, the local health department and the Bureau of Licensing will be notified immediately.

POLICY ON ADMINISTERING MEDICATION TO STUDENTS:

Medication (prescription and non-prescription) will be given only after receipt of written approval from the child’s parents. All medications will be kept in a secured area that is inaccessible to the children.

Non-prescription medication must be stored in the original labeled container with a child-proof cap. Prescription medication must be stored in its original container which has been labeled with the child’s name, the date of the medication, the date it was prescribed or updated, and the directions for its administration. Prescription medications may only be given to the child for whom it was prescribed. Non-prescription, over-the-counter medication may only be given according to the directions on the label. We may give antihistamines, decongestants, cough suppressants, acetaminophen, ibuprofen or topical skin

ointments with a note from the child's parent. Other types of non-prescription medication may only be given with an accompanying doctor's note.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENTS AND CONFIDENTIALITY OF STUDENT RECORDS

As educators of young children, we have a shared responsibility to make ethical, appropriate, valid and reliable assessment a part of our program. We assess each child's strengths, progress, and needs. We use assessment methods that are developmentally appropriate, culturally and linguistically responsive and are tied to children's daily activities. Our assessments are supported by professional development and are inclusive of families. These assessments allow us to make sound decisions about teaching and learning and help us to identify significant concerns that may require focused intervention for individual children.

We discuss results only with those who have a right and need to know, that is, with the child's parents or guardians, and other teachers and specialists who work with the child. Any files containing sensitive information about family background or children's problems are kept strictly confidential.

We offer hearing and speech screenings each year, at a minimum cost. We also provide Gesell developmental testing when we feel we need additional information about a child's growth and development. These screenings will be given without parental authorization.

PLAYGROUND RULES, SCHOOL PARKING, AND DRIVING ON AVENUE AT THE COMMONS

Because we care about the safety of our students, we have developed the following playground rules. When you collect your child from the playground area, please sign your child out with the teachers, and then leave promptly with your child. Siblings must be held by the hand and attended at all times.

When you bring and collect your child, please park alongside the curb that is closest to the school. Parking on the opposite side of the street is prohibited. Please do not allow your child to run to the car ahead of you.

We do not want to have any accidents at school. If you are staying at school for an extended period of time, please park in the parking lot.

Please follow the posted speed limit signs. The speed limit on Avenue at the Commons is 20 MPH to insure the safety of the children.

SCHOOL CLOTHING AND CUBBY INFORMATION

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothing and sneakers so that your child will be freely involved in our learning activities. Sturdy, washable clothing is recommended. Sneakers are required in our classrooms each and every day.

If your child wears shoes or boots other than sneakers to class, your child must change into his/her sneakers once the school day begins. During the winter months, your child will need appropriate waterproof winter boots for outdoor play. Sandals and Crocs are never permitted for play on outdoor equipment.

If your child wears pants with a belt to school, it is essential that she or he be able to unfasten the belt without assistance, thereby preventing bathroom accidents. Because the strings in sweatshirt hoods pose a safety hazard, please remove the strings from your child's sweatshirts before sending them to school.

Each child needs a new vinyl smock at the beginning of each year. We use these smocks for art and cooking projects and wash them regularly. We highly recommend the long-sleeved painting smocks from Hearth Song at 800-325-2502. These smocks are comfortable for the children and maintain their quality after many washings. Sleeveless smocks are not acceptable because they do not provide adequate coverage. Please remember that even if your child is wearing an art smock, he or she may still end up with paint on his or her clothing!

Each child needs to have a school bag. You may wish to purchase a creative learning center bag from our school store. School bags must be cloth, vinyl or canvas and should be clearly labeled with your child's name.

These bags will be utilized to carry school projects and papers to and from school. Each parent must provide a 15 quart clear Sterlite or Rubbermaid storage box with matching lid to hold your child's extra cubby items. It should be about 14 inches in length and no wider than 9 inches. The depth is about 6 inches. We must insist that the box be the correct size due to storage limitations. Parents usually

have success finding these boxes at Target. Please place the following items inside the clear plastic box:

1. A change of underwear and socks, labeled with child's name
2. A pair of pants and a pair of shorts
3. A short-sleeved and long-sleeved shirt
4. A sweatshirt or light jacket
5. A thin baby blanket
6. A pair of slippers (each labeled with name on bottom)

ALL ITEMS IN YOUR CHILD'S BOX MUST BE LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.

At www.labelyourstuff.com, you may wish to purchase sticky or iron-on labels with your child's name. Please note: If your child has an accident and does not have appropriate clothing in the box, we will call you to collect your child.

Classroom work will be placed on the top shelf of your child's cubby. Since your child will be sharing a cubby with other children, it is important that you carefully check all papers for your child's name. It is quite upsetting when a parent takes a newsletter or class project that belongs to another student. Please check your child's cubby each day and take home his or her work!

On snowy or cold days, we will continue to have outside playtime. Please provide slip-on type boots that go directly over your child's socks, snow pants, mittens, and a hat each and every wintry day. Please make sure every item is clearly labeled. Write your child's name in permanent marker on each of the boots. It is most helpful if you place all of the winter clothes in a separate bag that is also labeled with your child's name.

If your child is well enough to be at school, he or she is well enough to go outside. Unfortunately, we do not have the staffing to keep children inside who are not adequately prepared for the winter.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO PROVIDE THE CORRECT CLOTHING EACH DAY!

SNACK AND LUNCH:

A mid-day snack will be served in the nursery and Primary classes. Snacks include juice, milk, fresh fruit, crackers, cereal, snack mix, and other nutritious foods. Sweets such as cookies, cupcakes, and candy will only be served on special holidays. We do not permit any child to have gum or candy in school. Please be sure to indicate if your child has any food allergies and update us if those allergies change!

Children who attend our Primary Learning or enrichment programs will need to bring lunch boxes to school. Please write your child's name on the front of his or her lunch box. A child's lunch must be ready to eat and include a drink. We recommend that you send a sandwich, yogurt, fruit or other healthy foods. Please limit the number of sweet snacks. Your child will need energy to enjoy his or her afternoon activities. If your child has a thermos, please check it for leaks (especially once washed in the dishwasher).

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS:

It is our pleasure to celebrate your child's birthday with him or her at school. Please be sure to schedule the date for this celebration with your child's teacher. Our policy is that you may provide muffins, munchkins, or ice cream cups. We will NOT serve cupcakes or cake (or any dessert with icing) since we have found that these snacks often interfere with the children's appetites for lunch. We do not allow any elaborate celebrations and prohibit entertainment and favors during school birthday celebrations. Thank you for your cooperation.

Invitations to outside birthday parties or other celebrations must be mailed directly to students. We do NOT permit parents to place any invitations in school cubbies.

PHOTOGRAPH OF YOUR CHILD:

Please send in a recent 4"x6" photograph of your child. This photograph should show your child's face clearly. We will need the photograph for our "Back to School" bulletin boards and would like to receive it no later than August 15th.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHS:

With parental consent before publication, it is our policy to allow photographs of the students during school hours and activities to be posted on our school website, social media outlets, public relations publications, brochures and press releases to local newspapers. The child's name and other personal identifiers will never be included.

If you have an objection to sharing photos of your child, please inform us in writing. Each Fall, we offer school photos by a professional photographer. You may purchase individual and class photos and will be notified of the date as soon as possible.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION:

Our goal is to work in a collaborative partnership with the families. Open lines of communication between teachers and parents are essential. With ongoing, two-way communication, we are able to build trust and mutual understanding. The teachers are open to helping parents with strategies to improve learning and development. They are happy to meet with you. Please call to schedule an appointment to discuss your child's progress or to share any concerns.

Parents are welcome visitors at our school. We encourage parents to become involved in the program in various ways, such as participation in our career education program, participating in a "traditions" presentation, or helping with a class trip. We also offer special evenings to educate parents on important topics, such as reading readiness or effective discipline.

Parents are invited to an orientation program with their child in the beginning of the school year. The orientation program is designed to ease the adjustment to the school environment.

A "Back-To School" night for parents is scheduled during September or early October. During this event, the director and teachers will thoroughly explain the curriculum offered and answer questions about the school and its policies. It is highly recommended that both parents attend this important program.

Newsletters will be sent via e-mail on a regular basis. It is essential that you provide an up-to-date e-mail address for school correspondence. The newsletters are our means of sharing the goals of our curriculum as well as giving important program information. It is essential that parents read the newsletters and mark down any important dates on their personal calendars.

Written progress reports are given three times during the year. Formal conferences are scheduled twice each year. If there are any difficulties or concerns about an individual child's development, a special team meeting will be arranged. The director and teachers will meet with the parents to develop a plan for dealing with the ongoing problem.

If you wish to communicate with the director via the internet, you may e-mail her at creativelearningcenter@rocketmail.com.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:

At creative learning center, we believe it is important to involve our students in community-based learning experiences. Our program builds community relationships among staff, families and community members by developing and maintaining relationships within the larger community. Our students are involved in a variety of community events, from participating in a Muscular Dystrophy Hop-a-Thon to riding trikes to raise funds for St. Jude's Hospital. Our primary students are engaged in a long-term intergenerational arts program with local seniors at a nearby nursing facility.

Our teachers and families work together to plan fundraising and social events. Many events are very informal and help families make connections to other members of the school community. We also have an annual parent-teacher dinner dance that raises funds for big projects while allowing parents to develop close relationships.

POSITIVE DISCIPLINE POLICY:

At the creative learning center, it is our goal to develop the individual child's feelings of self-esteem. Our approach to discipline enhances each child's emotional development. Positive discipline is utilized as a process of teaching children how to behave appropriately. Positive discipline respects the rights of the

individual child, the group, and the adult. Punishment is quite different than positive discipline. With positive discipline, we are teaching the children what they should do.

Our classrooms are structured so that positive discipline is meaningful. The children are given clear, consistent guidelines. The schedule of the day is well-planned and organized, creating less opportunity for conflicts. We try to anticipate and eliminate potential problems. The children are involved in group decision-making and are encouraged to take responsibility for their classroom and their behavior within the class environment.

Teachers recognize and encourage pro-social behaviors among children, such as cooperation, using words to solve problems, and concern for others. Expectations of children's social behavior are developmentally appropriate.

When conflicts do arise, it is our policy to intervene by either redirecting the child to a new activity to change the focus of the child's behavior or by providing individualized attention to help the child deal with the particular behavior. We empower the child to make a good choice. The natural or logical consequences of the child's behavior are utilized as another means of promoting positive behavior. Feelings are shared in our classroom and the children are taught that it is acceptable to release feelings in a verbal way. When a child is having a difficult time, we talk about the child's behavior and do not label the child as "bad."

The most important part of our approach to discipline is our attention to positive behaviors. When a child is working well or improving in an area, we provide a great deal of loving encouragement. We appreciate the uniqueness of each child and encourage the child to express his or her ideas. We strive to stimulate development in all areas: social, emotional, cognitive, and physical. In our approach to discipline, encouragement, approval, and positive reinforcement are the main ingredients.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE:

If you have a problem or complaint, your first avenue is to schedule a meeting with your child's teachers before or after school hours. If the problem is not resolved, you may also schedule a meeting with the assistant director and

director. It is our goal to work with each family to create a positive learning environment for every child. By communicating with the teachers on a regular basis, problems should not escalate and should be resolved in a timely fashion.

EXPULSION POLICY:

A child may be expelled from our Center if his or her behavior is interfering with the healthy social-emotional or cognitive development of the other students in the classroom. Expulsion from our school is a last resort with the exception of potentially dangerous behavior by a child or parent. If such dangerous behavior occurs, the child will be immediately expelled. Under other circumstances, our first step is to work with the child in the classroom using positive discipline methods, as well as choices and consequences. A short time-out period from the class environment may be necessary at times if we feel that this would be in the best interest of the child as well as his or her classmates. Secondly, we contact the parents and set up a conference with them where we develop a cooperative action plan that will be reinforced at home as well as at school. We also make arrangements for consistent communication between the teachers and the parents to monitor the progress of the child in the area of concern. We may recommend that the parents seek outside professional advice, i.e. from a child psychologist or social worker. We may consider having a child psychologist come to our school to observe the child and to give the staff further assistance in dealing with the problem. At each of these steps, we will formulate a written plan and ask the parents to sign the plan. If we feel that there is not enough improvement in the child's behavior over a designated time period or if the parents are unwilling to work with the teachers to resolve the problem, we may then decide to expel the child from our program. CLC will allow one to two weeks for the parent to find alternate care for the expelled child.

TOYS FROM HOME, NON-VIOLENT POLICY, AND "SHARE AND TELL" DAYS:

Your child may bring his or her favorite toys to school only on Share and Tell days. However, we do not permit "violent" toys in our school, including Power Rangers, Pokemon, Digimon, Ninja Turtles, swords, toy guns or any kind of weapon-like toys. We do not permit violent language in our school. A child using such language will be separated from the other children and the parents will be called in to discuss solutions to this serious problem. Continual violent behavior or threatening language may result in a child's dismissal from the school.

Nursery school students will have “Share and Tell” scheduled on Tuesdays or Wednesdays.

Primary students have “Share and Tell” on Wednesdays. Share and Tell is an opportunity for the child to share something special with his or her classmates. The child is free to share the item throughout the play time period.

EARLY BIRDS:

Our before school program begins at 8:30 A.M. The program is offered as a service to our working parents. Each morning, the children will be supervised by one of our teachers and offered a variety of activities. Calendars for the Early Birds program are placed in the lobbies each month. Please fill out the calendar and return it, along with payment, by the 20th of the preceding month. We are happy to accommodate your need for Early Birds care if given at least 24 hour notice and prepayment.

CLASS TRIPS:

Field trips are an important part of our school program. Children learn a great deal about their world from these trips. Parents are encouraged to volunteer to help drive and supervise the children during school trips. In order to make the trips run as smoothly as possible, we have established the following guidelines:

1. Students must wear their school T-shirts or sweatshirts on each field trip. NO EXCEPTIONS! Your child will be given one school shirt at the beginning of the school year. Many parents find that the sweatshirt and school jacket are worthwhile investments. You may purchase additional shirts, sweatshirts, and jackets from our school store.
2. Parent volunteers must provide a current registration, license, and a vehicle insurance card that we will copy for our school records.
3. All students will need a signed permission form to attend the field trip. Usually, a group permission slip form is posted outside your child's classroom. If you are unable to come to school to sign the form, please send in a note indicating that your child has permission to attend the trip with our school.

4. If you would like to volunteer to help with a class trip, you must commit to driving both to and from the trip. You must be willing to take other children in your vehicle and you must supervise this group of children throughout the trip. No children will be permitted to sit in the front seat of the vehicle.

5. Absolutely NO siblings permitted on school trips. Our trips are designed as a learning experience for our students. If you cannot arrange child care for your other children, please do not volunteer to join that particular trip.

6. In most cases, your child's participation fees have been paid by the school. If there is a fee per adult, each adult attending the trip will be responsible for that fee. These fees should be paid in advance.

7. If your child does not normally attend school on the day of the scheduled field trip, your child may join his or her class by signing the permission form and indicating your intentions to the child's teachers.

8. Finally, please help us to make the trip an extension of the classroom experience. The field trip is not intended as a social gathering for the parents, but rather as a means of enhancing the children's learning. Please stay with your child's teachers and try to help the children focus on the experience.

VEHICLE REQUIREMENTS FOR FIELD TRIPS:

All private passenger vehicles that are utilized to transport children for field trips shall be equipped with car seats (child passenger restraint systems) and/or booster seats that meet Federal motor vehicle safety standards, as appropriate for the age and weight of the children transported, in accordance with applicable provisions of DMV law, pursuant to N.J.S.A. 39:3-76.2a and f. Children less than 12 years old must ride in the back seat with the appropriate child restraints. A belt-positioning booster seat must be utilized for children weighing 40-80 pounds and must be secured with a three-point seat belt (lap and shoulder belt). All students shall be accepted and discharged from the curbside of the vehicle. Children shall never be left unattended in a vehicle.

POLICY ON THE RELEASE OF CHILDREN:

According to State regulations, each child may be released only to the child's custodial parent(s) or persons authorized by the custodial parents to take the child from the Center and assume responsibility for the child in an emergency if the custodial parents cannot be reached. A child shall not be visited by or released to a non-custodial parent unless the custodial parent specifically authorizes the Center to allow such visits or release in writing. This written authorization will be maintained in the child's file.

If the parent or person authorized by the parent fails to pick up a child at the time of the Center's daily closing, the Center shall ensure that:

1. The child is supervised at all times;
2. Staff members attempt to contact the parent or person authorized by the parent; and
3. An hour or more after closing time, and provided that other arrangements for releasing the child to his/her parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) have failed and the staff members cannot continue to supervise the child at the Center, the staff member shall call the Division's 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline (1-800-792-8610) to seek assistance in caring for the child until the parent or person authorized by the child's parent is able to pick-up the child.

If the parent(s) or person(s) authorized by the parent(s) appears to be physically and emotionally impaired to the extent that, in the judgment of the director and/or staff member, the child would be placed at risk of harm if released to such an individual, the Center shall ensure that:

1. The child may not be released to such an impaired individual;
2. Staff members attempt to contact the child's other parent or an alternative person(s) authorized by the parent(s); and

3. If the Center is unable to make alternative arrangements, a staff member shall call the Division's 24 hour Child Abuse Hotline to seek assistance in caring for the child.

NEW JERSEY LAW AGAINST DISCRIMINATION

Our Center is required to comply with the New Jersey Law Against Discrimination (LAD) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Our program is designed to be inclusive of all children and to meet the needs of each individual child in a developmentally appropriate manner. If you believe that our Center is not in compliance with these laws, you may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the New Jersey Department of Law and Public Safety. For information about filing an LAD claim, call 609 292-4605 or to file an ADA claim, call 800 514-0301.

DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES INFORMATION TO PARENTS

Under provisions of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (NJAC 3A:52), every licensed child care center in N.J. must provide to parents of enrolled children written information on parent visitation rights, State licensing requirements, child abuse/neglect reporting requirements and other child care matters. The center must comply with this requirement by reproducing and distributing to parents and staff this written statement, prepared by the Office of Licensing, Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families. In keeping with this requirement, the center must secure every parent and staff member's signature attesting to his/her receipt of the information.

Our center is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing law to be licensed by the Office of Licensing (OOL) Child Care & Youth Residential Licensing, in the Department of Children and Families (DCF). A copy of our current license must be posted in a prominent location at our Center. Look for it when you're in the center.

To be licensed, our Center must comply with the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers (the official licensing regulations). The regulations cover such areas as: physical environment/life-safety; staff qualifications, supervision and staff/child ratios; program activities and equipment; health, food and nutrition; rest and



sleep requirements; parent/community participation; administrative and record keeping requirements; and others.

Our Center must have on the premises a copy of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, just ask any staff member. Parents may view a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the DCF website at <http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/licensing/laws/CCCmanual.pdf> or obtain a copy by sending a check or money order for \$5.00 made payable to the "Treasurer, State of NJ" and mailing it to: NJDCF, Office of Licensing, Publication Fees, PO Box 657, Trenton, NJ 08646-0657.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of the Center or the meaning, application or alleged violations of the Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers.

We will be happy to arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters with us. If you suspect our Center may be in violation of licensing requirements, you are entitled to report them to the Office of Licensing toll free at 1-877-667-9845. Of course, we would appreciate it if you would bring these concerns to our attention as well.

Our Center must have a policy concerning the release of children to parents or people authorized by parents to be responsible for the child. Please discuss with us your plans for your child's departure from the Center.

Our Center must have a policy about administering medicine and health care procedures as well as the management of communicable diseases. Please talk to us about these policies so we can work together to keep our children healthy. Our Center must have a policy concerning the expulsion of children from enrollment at the Center. Please review this policy so we can work together to keep your child in our Center.

Parents are entitled to review the Center's copy of the Office of Licensing's Inspection/Violation Reports on the Center, which are after every State licensing inspection of our Center. If there is a licensing complaint investigation, you are

also entitled to review the Office's Complaint Investigation Summary Report, as well as any letters of enforcement or other actions taken against the Center during the current licensing period. Let us know if you wish to review them and we will make them available for your review or you can view them online at <https://data.nj.gov/childcareexplorer>.

Our Center must cooperate with all DCF inspections/investigations. DCF staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our Center must post its written statement of philosophy on child discipline in a prominent location and make a copy of it available to parents upon request. We encourage you to review it and to discuss with us any questions you may have about it.

Our Center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the OOL for the children's use. Please speak to us if you have questions about the Center's space.

Our Center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to assist the Center in complying with licensing requirements; and to participate in and observe the activities of the Center. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the Center should discuss their interest with the Center director, who can advise them of what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our Center at any time without having to secure prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so. We welcome visits from our parents. Our Center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the Center, and must obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Our Center is required to provide reasonable accommodations for children and/or parents with disabilities and comply with the NJ Law Against Discrimination (LAD), P.L. 1945, c. 169 (N.J.S.A. 10:5-1 et seq.) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), P.L. 101-336 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). Anyone who believes the Center is not in compliance with these laws may contact the Division on Civil Rights in the NJ Department of Law and Public Safety for information about filing an LAD claim

at (609) 292-4605 (TTY users may dial 711 to reach the NJ Relay Operator and ask for (609) 292-7701), or may contact the United States Department of Justice for information about filing an ADA claim at (800) 514-0301 (voice) or (800) 514-0383 (TTY). Our Center is required, at least annually, to review the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), unsafe children's products list, ensure that items on the list are not at the center, and make the list accessible to staff and parents, and/or provide parents with the CPSC website at <https://www.cpsc.gov/Recalls>. Internet access may be available at your local library. For more information, call the CPSC at 800-638-2772.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation by any adult, whether working at the Center or not, is required by State law to report the concern immediately to the State Child Registry Hotline, toll free at 1-877-NJ ABUSE/ 877-652-2873. Such reports may be made anonymously. Parents may secure information about child abuse and neglect by contacting: DCF, Office of Communications and Legislation at (609) 292-0422 or go to <http://www.nj.gov/dcf>.

POLICY ON METHODS OF PARENTAL NOTIFICATION

In the event of an emergency medical situation, our staff will notify the primary parent(s) or guardian(s) immediately by telephone. If we do not reach the primary parent, we will call each of the emergency contacts listed on the child's paperwork. Depending on the severity of the situation, we will either contact the child's physician or call 911 for emergency medical assistance. If the situation warrants, we will wait 30 minutes for the parent or other contact to respond to our call.

In the event of an early dismissal or other school event, we will not only notify parents by telephone, but will send out emails and possibly text messages. Parent coordinators have permission to contact you by phone, email or text in this situation. For closings related to snow or other weather conditions, parents will be notified by email only.

POLICY ON THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is defined as online technology tools that enable people to communicate easily via the internet to share information. While social media can keep us connected with a broad range of colleagues and friends they also have inherent risks.

It is important that we are able to use these technologies and services effectively and flexibly. However, it is also important to ensure that we balance this with our duties to our community, our legal responsibilities, and our school's reputation. Our use of social networking applications has implications for our duty to safeguard children, young people, and vulnerable adults. As part of our duty to safeguard children, it is essential to maintain the privacy and security of all families. The purpose of the policy is to:

- Safeguard all children
- Ensure that the reputation of the school, its staff, and its families are protected
- Protect the school from legal risks

With parental consent before publication, it is our policy to allow photographs of the students during school hours and activities to be posted on our school website, social media outlets, public relations publications, brochures, and press releases to local newspapers. The child's name and other personal identifiers will never be included.

Our teaching staff may communicate with parents using their cell phones or personal email accounts. They may message the parents with texts relating to the individual child and may share photos of children. The staff may not override the administrator's role in dealing with attendance issues or other important or sensitive issues. The staff may not post any photos of students or information about students to their personal Facebook, Instagram, or other social media accounts. School staff are strongly advised to set all privacy settings to the highest possible levels on all personal social media accounts.

Before sharing information or pictures of children other than your own, parents should ask for the respective permissions from the student's parents to maintain privacy and confidentiality laws. Parents may communicate with the teaching staff by telephone, email, or text. However, parents are cautioned to respect teachers' privacy and communicate only during regular work hours. At any other



time, parents are welcomed to communicate with the school through the school's official email address posted on www.creativelearningcenternj.com.